



video
TODAY

THE TOP 100 HORROR
TAPES

PLUS: THE MONSTER
GALLERY

& PICTURES OF
GORE GALORE

GUIDE TO HORROR VIDEO





CONTENTS

Monster Gallery—The gang's all here!	5
Horror Hundred—A scream guide to late night viewing!	9
Horror Picture Gallery—Creators of darkness	23
Buyers Guide—A company listing	29
Screams For Sale—The art of horror	30
Sexy Screammers—A wail of a time!	32

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Introduction

Good evening fellow fright fans, and welcome to thirty two fear-packed pages concerning the celluloid antics of all your favourite fiends. Within this special *Video Today* supplement you will find articles on superstar monsters like Dracula, Frankenstein, the Mummy and the Werewolf, as well as tips on how to avoid them during these long dark evenings. There's also a piece on the fantasy females who provide the glamour behind the gore and last but very definitely not least a listing of the top 100 horror tapes you can currently buy or rent in this country. If a particular title strikes your fancy you can order it using the list of distributors' addresses provided.

One thing that did strike us in preparing this list was just how many great horror films are no longer available because the companies that once distributed them have gone out of business. The now-defunct Intervision, for example had Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* and *Zombies: Dawn of the Dead*, Cronenberg's *Shivers*, Rabier and *The Brood* and Fulci's *City of the Living Dead*. Hekushin went under dragging with it such classic titles as *Witchfinder General* and *Island of Death*. It's a shame, because all of these belong in any horror hall of fame. Still, at least there is a distinct possibility that some will eventually turn up again at a reasonable price on budget labels like Channel 5 or The Video Collection. In the meantime, get hold of your favourite ghoul fiend, pull up a coffin lid and enjoy our feast of horrible happenings. But don't stay up too late reading. It's not long till daylight.

MONSTER GALLERY

A quartet of cinema's most frightful celebrity fiends...

The Frankenstein Monster

A mouldy looking chap with a bolt through his neck who sports the biggest pair of hob-nail boots in monsterdom. Can often be seen visiting old pals in the graveyard. Pet hates: clumsy hunchbacked assistants who always give him the wrong brain by mistake; exploding laboratories, and not knowing what to put his birth certificate.

Mary Woolstonecraft Shelley was just nineteen years old on the night of the 19th of June, 1816, when she retired to bed in Lord Byron's Villa Diodati on the shores of Lake Geneva. By morning she had conceived the idea of a gothic horror tale about a young medical student named Frankenstein who fashions a monstrous composite corpse and then brings it to life to do his bidding. *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* was published in 1818 and has never been out of print since.

The movies first discovered the Frankenstein story in 1910, with actor Charles Ogle portraying Shelley's creation as a shaggy chested hunchback. But the definitive article didn't arrive until 1931, when William Henry Pratt changed his name to Boris Karloff, put on some highly effective Jack Pierce makeup and went out to manace the world. This Frankenstein made Boris a star, and he later reprised the role in *The Bride of* (1935) and *The Son of* (1939)—two equally fine big budget Universal releases. The rot set in with the fourth movie: *The Ghost of Frankenstein* (1942) was produced at a time when the world was getting its fill of

real life horror, and Lon Chaney Jr hobbled about with little conviction. Glenn Strange (an actor better known as the barmen in the popular TV Western series *Gunslinger*) got under the greasepaint for *House of Frankenstein* (1944) and the Universal series faded with the poor chap being forced to meet Abbott and Costello a year later.

Frankie came back in the 50s in lurid Eastman colour courtesy of Hammer Films, who cast Christopher Lee as a ghastly corpse-like creature knocked together by evil Baron Peter Cushing. Hammer were not allowed to use the copyright Jack Pierce makeup until they struck a deal with Universal in 1954. The result was *The Evil of Frankenstein*, a movie which had former New Zealand wrestler Kiri Kingdon looking very much like Karloff had done years beforehand, but he did not possess that underrated actor's talent for mime. Other Big Frankies from the Hammer stable were mainly played by Dave (Darth Vader) Prowse. The monster's funniest screen moment came in Mel Brooks 1974 production *Young Frankenstein* (CBS Fox), where, in the guise of Peter Boyle, he staged a nifty tap dance and sang 'Putting On The Ritz'.

If you can't be bothered to schlep round the graveyard, put your feet up and watch Big Frank in the following video releases: *Frankenstein* (1931-CIC); *Frankenstein's Island* (Rank); Jesse James Moets *Frankenstein's Daughter* (Embassy); *Horror of Frankenstein* (Cannon); *The Bride* (RCA/Columbia).

Boris Karloff



Lan Chaney Jr

MONSTER GALLERY

The Werewolf

Quite the most hirsute of screen terrors. He is a normal looking guy most of the time, but when the full moon comes around, watch out! Because he develops the worst case of five o'clock shadow on record and goes out in search of human munchies. Pet hates: That 'Morning After' feeling; being told he looks like a pop star, and dandruff.

'Even a man who is pure in heart
And says his prayers by night
May become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms
And the autumn moon is bright.'

So goes the rhyme penned by screenwriter Curt Siodmak for the classic 1941 Werewolf picture, *The Wolf Man*. The concept of lycanthropy has long existed in the folklore of many countries, but it has no specific literary origins. On screen the first bona-fide case was recorded in 1935 when Henry Hull got nipped by one in the mountains of Tibet. This was not a huge success with the audiences of the time. But *The Wolf Man* (a little dreamed up by Boris Karloff, who never played this particular monster) turned out to be a major hit. This was the movie that gave rise to much of the cinema's werewolf lore, including the idea that such a creature could only be killed by a silver bullet—making it the most expensive of monsters to get rid of.

Lan Chaney is the actor most associated with the character. He played the cursed Lawrence Talbot in six movies: *The Wolf Man* (1941); *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* (1943); *House of Frankenstein* (1944); *House of Dracula* (1945); *Abbott and Costello Meet the Ghosts*

(1948) and the Mexican low budgeter *Face of the Screaming Werewolf* in 1958. In the late 50s Michael Landon (of *Bonanza* fame) tackled the part in *I Was A Teenage Werewolf*, which wasn't a bad movie despite its hokey title. Then Oliver Reed became the first colour lycanthrope (in an outstanding Roy Ashton makeup) in Hammer's *Curse of the Werewolf* (1961). The character never became one of Hammer's regulars, but the Spanish took him to heart and 'El Hombre Lobo', played by former weight-lifter Paul Naschy (real name Jacinto Molina) became a regular feature of 70s shockers like *La Noche de Walpurgis* (*The Werewolf Vs The Vampire Women*).

In early movies the transformation from man to wolf was accomplished by slow photographic dissolves, or, as was the case in *The Werewolf of London*, by having the character walk behind a series of pillars at the crucial moment! But in the 1980s new special effects techniques have been able to show us everything: David Naughton metamorphosing into *An American Werewolf in London* right before our very eyes, and Dee Wallace turning into what looks like a distant relative of a Yorkshire Terrier in *The Howling*. Among the sillier of wolf man epics for bad movie buffs to treasure are *The Beast Must Die* (1974), with its laughable 'Guess the Werewolf's break, and the unforgettable *Werewolf in A Girl's Dormitory* (1968) which boasted the theme song: 'A Ghoul in School'.

If you're fresh out of silver bullets and The Lone Ranger isn't in the area, I suggest it might be safer to



Len Chaney Jr.

MONSTER GALLERY

stay at home next full moon and catch our furry fiend in the following video releases: *An American Werewolf in London* (Channel 5); *The Howling* (Embassy); *The Company of Wolves* (Vestron); *Legend of the Werewolf* (Rank); *Wolfen* (Warner).

The Mummy

A walking band-aid who frequents Egyptian tombs. He doesn't say much (in fact he doesn't say anything), but likes to crush tomb desecrators to death for disturbing his shut-eye. Pot hates. People who make jokes about him being wrapped up in his work; having a silly name for a monster, and being forced to stand in the same spot for centuries.

When Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon discovered the tomb of Ti-lan-Kha-mun near Luxor in 1922 there was a story that the tomb bore a curse which would strike down those who entered it. True or false, the tale inspired Hollywood to wrap Boris Karloff up in bandages and aset him loose as the vengeful im-ho-top, a 3,700 year old priest buried alive for stealing a sacred scroll and set in motion again when his Egyptian tomb is desecrated by 'unworthy infidels'. The film was *The Mummy* (1932), and it enjoyed such success that the character became a regular member of the Universal stock company in movies like *The Mummy's Hand* (1940), *The Mummy's Tomb* (1942) and *The Mummy's Curse* (1943), where it was mainly played by Len Chaney Jr.

Hammer films remade *The Mummy* in technicolor in 1959 with Christopher Lee as the high priest Kharis, re-lived in the 19th century by an Egyptian fanatic bent on revenge. This was his only stab at the role. Stunt man Dickie Owen handled it next in *Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (1964), while Eddie Powell volunteered to be hidden under *The Mummy's Shroud* (1967). The 80s saw Chuck Heston coming to grips with one of them in *The Awakening*. But Hammer had already done the same story (Bram Stoker's *Jewel of the Seven Stars*) more justice in *Blood From the Mummy's Tomb* (1972)—the title was better fool. Certainly the silliest Mummy to hit the screen yet has been a female: Xochitl, the frisky menace behind the Mexican-made *Wrestling Women Vs. The Aztec Mummy*. She had the power to turn into a snake or a vampire bat—which made her a pretty hard gal to pin down in a straight fight!

If a trip to Egypt is out of the question at the moment, then why not mount an expedition to your local video shop and dig up the following Mummy mayhem: *The Tomb* (Guild); *The Awakening* (Cannon); *Blood From the Mummy's Tomb* (Cannon); *Curse of the Mummy's Tomb* (RCA Columbia).

MONSTER GALLERY

Count Dracula

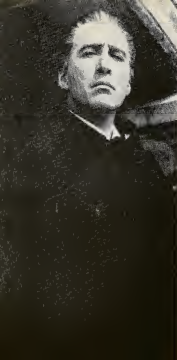
A distinguished bloodsucker usually found hanging around gothic castles. Always a sickly pale because he never gets out in the sunlight. He also has a hell of a job shaving because he doesn't show up in mirrors! Pet hates: Daylight visitors carrying long pointed sticks; Polo neck jumpers and girls who eat garlic.

Based on an infamous 19th-century torturer known as 'Vlad The Impaler' for his unsociable habit of sticking guests on stakes, this famous of all screen vampires was created in 1897 by Bram Stoker, a former drama critic for the *Dublin Mail*. His novel first found its way into the movies in 1922 when the celebrated German filmmaker F. W. Murnau ripped it off as *Nosferatu Eine Symphonie Der Grauen*, featuring the sinister looking Max Schreck as a long-fingered terror who disappeared when hit by sunlight. Stoker was not amused. He sued Murnau and forced the film to be withdrawn. Then in 1927 the book was turned into a stage play by respected dramatist Hamilton Deane. This later served as the basis for the talky Universal movie of 1931 which made the Count (in the guise of suave Hungarian actor Bela Lugosi) as popular folklore character and ensured him of regular screen employment over the next five decades.

Lugosi stayed with the character for a brief cameo in *Dracula's Daughter* (1936) before letting Lon Chaney Jr take over the role in the 1943 *Son of Dracula* and John

Camden in *The Hound of Frankenstein* (1944) and *The House of Dracula* (1945). These were all in monochrome. But in 1957 audiences got a chance to see Drac's grisly handiwork in technicolour, thanks to the efforts of Hammer Films, an English company dedicated to bringing back the most famous monsters of yesteryear. This new Dracula was played by 6ft 4in tall former Rank Chann school graduate Christopher Lee as a sexually magnetic individual who had women offering him much more than their necks to nibble on. Lee emerged as the archetypal latter day Count, in a series of six further Hammer horrors. But in each one he was given progressively less to do, so he eventually checked it in to become a 'serious' actor—and largely disappeared from sight! Among the silliest celluloid appearances to date of Stoker's famed undead aristocrat have been as a mean cowboy villain in the immortal *Bat The Kid Vs Dracula* (Embassy Video—1965), and as a stant-eyed Jap menace in the 1971 *Lake of Dracula*.

Armchair vampire hunters can sample his activities in the following video cassettes: *Scars of Dracula* (Thorn); *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* (Warner); *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (Warner); *Taste the Blood of Dracula* (Warner); *Dracula* (1931-CIC); *Dracula* (1979-CIC); *The Dracula Saga* (VPD); *Dracula's Last Rites* (Rank); *In Search of Dracula* (VPD).



100 BEST HORRORS ON VIDEO



Gore galore in the 100 best horror movies. Allan Bryce tells just what is available on video tape.

Alien (CBS Fox)

Answering a distress call from a remote planet, seven astronauts pick up a nasty looking people-eater who makes his first appearance by bursting out of John Hurt's stomach. An old dark house thriller updated to the Star Wars age with fine special effects and set design. Cert '18'

Alone in The Dark (Rank)

Four dangerous escapees from a lunatic asylum terrorize *The A Team*'s Dwight Schultz. Two of the nutcases are played by Jack Palance and Martin Landau, and the asylum is run by the equally haywire Donald Pleasance, so you get to see some heavyweight eyeball-rolling before the blood splattered climax is reached. Cert '18'

An American Werewolf in London (Channel 5)

New York University student David Naughton gets bitten by a werewolf on the Yorkshire moors. The next thing you know he's playing Red Moon Rising really loud and changing into the most horrible hairy monster since Rolf Harris threw it his deodorant. An unassailable mixture of comedy, horror and fine Rick Baker special effects. Cert '18'

The Amityville Horror (Channel 5)

Margot Kidder and James Brin certainly get ripped off by their estate agent here. He sells them a huge but haunted Long Island home which has black slime in the basement and horrible insects everywhere. In fact the only good thing about it is that Jehovah's Witnesses and Priest Rod Stinger won't come near the place. This is supposed to be a true story, and it raises quite a few chills. Cert '18'

And Now The Screaming Starts (Guild)

Dynasty's Stephanie Beacham and her husband Ian Ogilvy are tormented by a family curse in this well mounted gothic thriller. It seems that Ogilvy's wicked ancestor Herbert Lom had his evil way with a peasant girl and put off her woodsman boyfriend's hand. Now it crawls around strangling people. There's only one thing to do. Send for Peter Cushing. Cert '18'



Angel of Vengeance (Warner)

Also known as *MS-45*, this remarkable revenge shocker from Abel Ferrara, the director of *Dredd* Killer, has mute Zoe Tameris being raped twice on her way home from work in Manhattan's garment district (this is a rough area). She bashes the second guy's head in with a flat iron and chops him up in little pieces. Then she goes out in search of more fun. *Death Wish* for feminists. Cert '16'

Asylum (Guild)

'You have nothing to lose but your mind.' As usual the ads say it all. New doctor Robert Powell must guess which one of the patients of a remote asylum used to run the place. Is it harlot Lori, who plays with murdering robot dolls? Or is it Richard Todd, who chopped his wife up and put her in the freezer? Or maybe it's Betsy Morse, who tried to bring his dead son to life, or possibly Charlotte Rampling, who has a weird twin sister? Four intriguing tales by Robert (i/psycho) Bloch. Cert '18'

Basket Case (Palace)

A strange young man arrives at a seedy 42nd Street hotel bearing a mysterious wicker basket. Inside is his brother—a twisted lump of a creature who wants to get his revenge on the doctors who threw him in a asylum at birth. A heady low-budget shocker with very black overtones. The effects are surprisingly good. Cert '16'

The Beast With Five Fingers (Warner)

The best crawling fiend in the business goes after the throat of demented pianist Peter Lorne in this classic vintage (1946) chiller. 'Nail it to the table Pete!' Sanealist film maker Luis Bunuel apparently helped to film the macabre hand sequences. The film is equally memorable for Lorne's wonderfully over-the-top performance. Cert '15'

The Birds (CIC)

'The Birds is coming!' screamed the posters back in 1963, and even viewed today this Hitchcock frightener (based on a Daphne DuMaurier story) still packs a powerful punch. Nature turns on mankind as an isolated Californian community comes under attack from our 'highly feathered friends.' Great Albert Whitlock special effects and a cameo by Hitch walking some poodles. Cert '18'

The Bird With The Crystal Plumage (Stablecane)

A gripping Hitchcock-style thriller that established the reputation of Dario Argento, Italy's number one horror merchant. While in Rome on holiday, American writer Tony Musante witnesses a murder. He begins to unravel the identity of the killer, and places his own life in danger. Some fine suspense scenes. Cert '18'

Rosemary's Baby





FRANK BRIGHT

Blood From The Mummy's Tomb (Cannon)

An above-average 1972 Hammer Horror telling the story of how the soul of an Egyptian princess is transferred to the daughter of the archaeologist (Andrew Keir) who desecrated her tomb. The script (based on Brian Stoker's *Jewel of the Seven Stars*) is a bit confusing at times, but overall it's a good atmospheric lightener—and a lot better than *The Awakening*, a big-budget Charlton Heston picture that repeated the same tale a few years later. Cert '18.

Blood Simple (Palace)

When seedy night club owner Don Hickey discovers his wife is having an affair with one of his employees he hires a down-at-heel private detective (M. Emmet Walsh) to murder them both. But things don't exactly go as planned. . . . A remarkable essay in the macabre from the brothers Joel and Ethan Coen (who previously worked on editing *The Evil Dead*), full of fine performances, devilish twists and stark, night-mare images. Cert '18.

Body Double (RCA Columbia)

Out of work actor Craig Wasson gets mixed up in a brutal murder plot in this Hitchcock style thriller from Brian De Palma. He enters the world of porno moviemaking to track down the person who stuck a power drill through his beautiful neighbour's stomach. Elements of *Rear Window* and *Psycho* are blended uneasily in a heavily contrived storyline. But it certainly delivers the goods as far as exploitation sex and horror thrills

are concerned. Newcomer Melanie Griffith is excellent as adult movie star Holly Body. Cert '18.

The Body Snatcher (The Video Collection)

One of a series of literate, atmospheric chills produced by Vial Lewton at RKO studios in the 40s. This frightening adaptation of a Robert Louis Stevenson story has many memorable ingredients, including a mesmerising performance from Boris Karloff as the sinister grave robber who supplies 19th-century medical man Henry Daniell (also excellent) with bodies for his medical students to cut up. One classic moment has Karloff's coach steadily clip-clopping after a fragile street singer as she enters a dark and misty tunnel. Suddenly her song is cut off. A superb film, and that shock ending once gave me a sleepless night. Cert '15.

Carrie (Warner)

The first Stephen King novel to hit the screen was this stylish tale of a young girl (Sissy Spacek) with supernatural powers. When John Travolta tips a bucket of pigs blood over her head at the school prom she uses them to cause vengeful chaos. Fine performances by Spacek and Piper Laurie (as Carrie's religious fanatic mum) and showy direction from Brian De Palma. Cert '18.

Cat's Eye (Cannon)

A sprightly omnibus of macabre tales from the pen of the prolific Stephen King. The best has James Woods going to great lengths to quit smoking, but the other two,

featuring Robert (Aspland) Hays as a man who takes a dangerous bet, and Drew Barrymore as a girl terrorised by a monstrous troll are equally entertaining. Cert '15

Christine (RCA Columbia)

Stephen King's 1958 Plymouth Fury has a mind of its own. Even before it's off the assembly line it has murdered somebody for daring to throw ash on its seats. Twenty-five years later it drives high school wimp Keith Gordon completely off his rocker. Good commercial thrills from John (Halloween) Carpenter. Cert '18

Circus of Horrors (Cannon)

A wonderful vintage (1960) British shocker concerning the activities of a demented plastic surgeon (Anton Diffring) who uses a circus as a front for some heavy criminal activities. Performers who attempt to spill the beans to the police include the girl in a knife-throwing act and a lion tamer's assistant—three guesses what happens to them. Cert '18

The Comedy of Terrors (Rank)

Vincent Price, Peter Lorne, Boris Karloff and Basil Rathbone, all in the same movie! What else could any horror buff want? This all-star cast of veteran Englishmen have fun with a larky Richard Matheson script about a family of New England undertakers who decide to drum up their own business. An enjoyable spoof. Watch also for a guest cameo by the great Joe E. Brown. Cert '15

The Creature From The Black Lagoon (CIC)

A classic 50s monster movie. Members of an archaeological expedition searching the Amazon for the missing link between man and fish stumble across underwater swimming champion Ricou Browning in a scaly one piece Creature outfit. They want to take it back for study, while the Creature wants to take pretty scientist Julie Adams out for a fish supper. An exciting, actionful tale originally shot in 3D. Cert '16

Creepers (Palace)

Dano Argento's most recent movie stars 14-year-old Jennifer Connolly as a girl who can communicate with creepy-crawlies. They come to her aid when she is menaced by a stalk and slash psycho. The plot takes some swallowing, but as always in an Argento film the visuals are compelling. Highlights include Connolly taking a maggot bath and a monkey slicing and dicing Dana Nicolid (the ex Mrs Argento) with a razor. Cert '18

Creepshow (Stablecane)

An entertaining anthology of colourful horror tales written by Stephen King (who also appears in one episode as a farmer who turns into a plant). Based on the style of the E.C. comics of the 50s each yarn unfolds in a sprightly fashion.

There's one about a man who buries his wife and her lover neck deep in a sandy beach and waits for the tide to come in. Another has a vengeful corpse returning to celebrate Father's Day with his ungrateful



Basket Case

family. Then there's a toothy monster who comes out of a crate and a millionaire who gets drowned in cockroachess! The last one is the best, but all of the stories are well done, with excellent makeup work from Tom Savini (who can be glimpsed in the final scene) and fine direction by George (Night of the Living Dead) Romero. Cert '15

Curse of the Mummy's Tomb (RCA Columbia)

A walkingband ad terrifies 1920s London in this standard Hammer horror tale. The story may be nothing new, but as always performances, production design and photography are top notch, and there are quite a few thrills to be had watching the unstoppable Ra-Anel (Dickie Owen) going

about the business of teaching those tomb desecrators a firm lesson. Cert '18

Cut And Run (Medusa)

Any movie which boasts two bloody massacres within the first five minutes of its running time must be worthy of consideration for this list. Nutty Vietnam vet Richard Lynch tries to take over the South American drugs trade by slaughtering all the opposition. Television news reporter Lisa Blount goes into the Amazon jungle in search of an exclusive interview with him! Directed on some picturesque actual locations by Ruggero (Cannibal Holocaust) Deodato. Scenes censored from the video release include a man being split in half between two trees! Cert '18



The Evil Dead

The Dead Zone (Cannon)

Christopher Walken has a horrible car accident and awakes from a five year coma to discover he has a frightening power to see into the future. A superior Stephen King adaptation from David Cronenberg, the Canadian director of *Scanners*. Marred by a downbeat ending. Cat '18'

Death Line (Rank)

'Mind the Doors! Mind the doors!' screams a demented former train guard turned cannibal as he chases late night stragglers through Russell Square tube station. Inspector Donald Pleasance investigates.

and finds a whole gang of flesh-eaters living it up down there. A lively horror comic with some gory murders (the old shovel-in-the-head routine is used particularly well) and a tiny cameo from Chris Lee that somehow gets him star billing. Cat '18'

Death Warmed Up (Medusa)

Brain operations turn people into zombies in this outrageous exercise in the horror-grotesque from New Zealand director David Rhyne. Lots of gory action involving exploding bionics, and a splendidly shot underground bike chase. There's some evidence to suggest it's meant to be funny. Cat '18'

Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde (Cannon)

'Whoops!' That two faced doc drank the wrong potion this time Ralph Bates awakes up from his home made cocktail as the sultry Martine Beswick and strips off in front of a mirror to check it's not a gag. He seemed like such a nice boy in the original Robert Louis Stevenson story. A novel variation on an overused theme concocted by Brian Clemens (creator of *The Professionals*) in 1971. Cat '18'

Don't Be Afraid of the Dark (PolyGram)

A very good television movie which has newbies Keri Dunby and Jim Hutton (Timothy's dad) inheriting a spooky old mansion where goblins live behind the fireplace. Excellent makeup and some shivery

direction from John Newland, the man who created the famous *One Step Beyond* TV show. Cat '15'

Don't Look Now (Cannon)

A real weirdo from the talented former cameraman Nicolas Roeg. After losing their daughter in a tragic accident, Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland travel to Venice, where mysterious premonitions lead to some pretty horrible happenings and a brilliantly conceived final shock. Grim, gruesome stuff, very stylishly done. Based on a Daphne Du Maurier novella. Cat '18'

Dracula (CIC)

The original screen version of Bram Stoker's classic tale has Bela Lugosi savouring every corny line as the Transylvanian Count of the title. Fed up with being overdrawn at the blood bank in his own country, he sets himself up in a ruined abbey in Yorkshire and embarks upon a reign of terror which can only be ended when Edward Van Sloan's Van Helsing stakes him to a return journey. Vivid monochrome camerawork by Karl Freund and good art direction add the necessary atmosphere, but the film does tend to betray its theatrical origins. Not as good as the definitive 1957 Hammer masterpiece. Cat '18'

Dracula (CIC)

A lavish recent (1979) production that features a supposedly sexy Count in the guise of noted Broadway actor Frank Langella, and has Laurence Olivier as the man with a stake in his future. Beautifully photo-

graphed on bleak Cornish locations and overlaid with a sweeping John Williams score, but unfortunately a lot of the energetic thrills that Hammer once captured on a hundredth of the budget are embarked under the goes. Directed with care by John (War Games) Badham. Cat '18'

Dressed to Kill (Guild)

Brian De Palma's gory technicolor remake of *Psycho*. After Angie Dickinson gets razored to death in a lift her son (Keith Gordon) and a prostitute (Nancy Allen) go looking for the killer—and the killer comes looking for them! Need to Cave this is undoubtedly De Palma's best film. The plot is full of surprises and there's a neat final shock. Michael Caine turns up in drag. Cat '18'

The Evil Dead (Palace)

The DPP's favourite horror film. This grand gungui tale of a bunch of happy-go-lucky college kids encountering evil wood spirits while on holiday in the Tennessee boondocks is so over the top that it's funny. Zombies pop up everywhere, and severed limbs scuttle about the floor. Some holiday—and some mayhem! Cat '18'

The Exorcist (Warner)

The writer of *The Pink Panther* concocted the best selling fairground ride of a horror shocker in which Linda Blair vomits pee soup on just about everybody. Max Von Sydow is the man with the holy water who pops round to see what's got into her. Brilliant makeup work by Rick Baker and Dick Smith. The sequel was a turkey. Cat '18'

The Fly (MGM UA Video)

The one about the man who gets his atoms mixed up with those of a fly during a matter teleporting experiment. Al (Jeter David) Hedison, star of the old *Voyage To The Bottom of the Sea* TV show, plays the unfortunate scientist who ends up with the bounc of a bluebottle. An outrageous idea is cleverly put over in a film that became a major hit and spawned two sequels and a remake (coming shortly from Canada's David Cronenberg). The James Clavell who wrote the screenplay from a *Playboy* short story went on the pen the bestselling *Shogun*. Cert '15'

The Fog (Channel 5)

A good, atmospheric ghost story from John Carpenter which failed to repeat the commercial success of his earlier *Halloween*. Two hundred years after the pirate ship *Elizabeth Dane* was lured on to the rocks by the inhabitants of its small Californian coastal town the spirits of its crew turn up in a thick pea-souper to wreak havoc. John Carpenter does a cameo as a church caretaker. Cert '15'

Frankenstein (CIC)

The original (1931) screen version of Mary Shelley's classic has Colin Clive as the misguided megalomaniac who cobbles together Boris Karloff from bits of old dead bodies. A few million volts of electrical energy later and old bolt-neck is out creating a few dead bodies of his own. The then 44-year-old Karloff found fame and a lucrative career in a part turned down by Bela Lugosi (who com-

plained about having no lines to say). A bleak, but stylish movie with wonderfully atmospheric sets designed by Kenneth Strickfaden. The sequel, *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935) is generally regarded as the best of the Universal series. Cert '15'

Fright Night (RCA Columbia)

What would you do if you suddenly found out that your suave and sophisticated next-door-neighbour (Chris Sarandon) was actually a vampire? You and I would probably move, but youngster William Ragsdale can't get his parents to believe in such things—which is a pity, because the blood-sucker has him marked down for his next midnight snack! A stylish, well-written 'Boy Who Cried Vampire' tale which starts slowly but builds to a fine, fright, and gore-filled climax. Excellently written and directed by Tom (Psycho 2) Holland. Cert 18.

The Fury (CIC)

Brain De Palma tries to recreate his *Cave* success with this muddled tale of telepathic twins. Amy Irving (now Mrs Steven Spielberg) and Andrew Stevens are the couple who can do horrible things to people with their mind, and John Cassavetes is the government nifty wanting to exploit their talents. Kirk Douglas plays Stevens' dad, who tries to rescue them. Some notable special effects scenes, including a realistic exploding body! Cert '18'

Ghostbusters (RCA Columbia)

A trio of inept spook chasers (Bill Murray,

Dan Akoyd and Harold Ramis) set up shop in New York. A big money-making horror spoof packed with hit and miss gags and the most elaborate special effects money can buy. The beautiful Sigourney Weaver supplies the love interest as the girl who finds devil dogs in her fridge. Cert '15'

Ghost Story (CIC)

Peter Straub's chunky bestseller about four old men (Fred Astaire, Melvyn Douglas, John Houseman and Douglas Fairbanks) haunted by the ghost of a girl they killed years beforehand comes to the screen in a not entirely satisfactory fashion. Under John Tinker, *Taker, Soldier, Spy!* Inn's fastidious direction the complex story takes rather too long to unravel. But there are some real jolts along the way, mainly provided by the lovely Alice Krige's unsettling habit of suddenly turning into a decomposing corpse! Cert '15'

The Gorgon (RCA Columbia)

Hammer temporarily abandoned *Franz* (Frankenstein and Dracula) to borrow a monster from Greek mythology with this 1964 venture. Barbara Shelley is the nice Transylvanian girl who has a problem with her hair: it turns men to stone! There are statues everywhere before Professor Chris Lee wields a broadsword to give her a trim. A predictable script by John Gilling, and that head of snakes could have looked more convincing, but marvellous photography, great sets and stylish direction by Hammer's best man, Terence Fisher, make this look better as the years go by. Cert '15'

Gremlins (Warner)

When young Billy Peltzer (Zach Galligan) gets a Gremlin for Christmas things in the tiny American town of Kingston Falls will never be the same again. Because, when he disobeys the instructions that come with it and gets his cuddly new pet wet, out pop a few hundred fur balls that grow into horrible creatures whose idea of fun is to wreck the place. Lots of in-jokes from director Joe Dante in this sprightly Steven Spielberg production. Cert '15'

The Gorgon



Halloween II (Cannon)

The original is no longer available, but this efficient sequel, directed by Rick (Bad Boys) Rosenthal approximates the spirit of John Carpenter's stark and slash classic. Jamie Lee Curtis finds out the indestructible killer who pursued her in the first film is really her brother. Donald Pleasance also gets a bit hot under the collar as a gun-toting liberal? psychiatrist. Cert '18.

Halloween III: Season of the Witch (Cannon)

Not really another sequel in the slice and dice mould, this way out venture concerns a Druid mask maker (Dan O'Herlihy) who has robots manufacturing masks containing microchips from Slonchanga. Anyone wearing them on Halloween night will get turned into a mass of spiders and snakes. Just silly enough to be fun if you're in the right mood. Cert '18.

Hands of the Ripper (Rank)

A staid Hammer horror from Hungarian director Peter Sasdy which has pretty Welsh actress Angharad Rees as the daughter of Jack the Ripper unwillingly forced to follow in Dad's bloody footsteps. Handsome photography and period (Victorian) set design, particularly in the remarkable climax in the Whispering Gallery of St Paul's Cathedral. Cert '18.

Horror Hospital (Ivor)

'One of our guests had a bad night' says

mad medic Michael Gough when Robin Askwith comments on a blood-soaked mattress in this over-the-top British shocker that hails from 1973. A real slice with such ingredients as axe-wielding dwarfs and brain-damaged zombies who ride motorcycles. Michael Gough fans will need no further recommendation. Cert '18.

The House of Dark Shadows (MGM/UA)

Dan Curtis, who recently made *The Winds of War*, used to be involved with a very popular American soap opera about vampires. It was called *Dark Shadows* and featured Jonathan Frid as the 150 years young Barnabas Collins. This 1970 feature drawn from the show is slow moving but atmospheric and perks up for a grisly climax. Cert '18.

The House of the Long Shadows (Guild)

A publisher challenges horror author Desi Arnez Jr to write a horror novel in 24 hours, so he goes to an isolated house deep in the Welsh countryside to get the right atmosphere for the task. When Peter Cushing, Chris Lee, Vincent Price and John Carradine greet him at the door he knows he's come to the right place. A pleasantly old fashioned spooker with a clever final twist. Cert '18.

House of Wax (Warner)

This 1953 classic launched Vincent Price on a long and profitable career as a horror star (which continues to this day, with the

newly completed *From a Whisper To A Scream* awaiting release). He plays a horribly scarred sculptor who steals bodies from the local morgue and waxes them up to decorate his sinister wax museum in turn of the century Baltimore. Charles Bronson (then Buchinsky) skulks around in the background as Igor. Originally shot in 3D by a director who couldn't appreciate it, he only had one eye. Cert '18.

The House That Dripped Blood (Brent Walker)

Four horror tales by Robert Bloch, the author of *Psycho*, make up this memorable 1971 anthology horror. Denholm Elliott is a writer forced to tussle with his fictional murderer, Peter Cushing meets a horrible fate in a wax museum, Chris Lee is a victim of voodoo, and Jon Pertwee is the horror star who finds a vampire cloak bought in a mysterious antique shop helps him sink his teeth into his role. One of the best of its kind. Cert '15.

The Howling (Embassy)

A horror buff's delight. Joe Dante's tongue-in-jowl werewolf movie concerns a Californian consciousness raising group who are actually a coven of wolf-people. Scary transformation scenes (brilliantly designed by makeup genius Rob Bottin) alternate with good visual gags and lots of references for true buffs to pick up on. Like the fact that every character is named after the director of a previous werewolf movie, and people like Roger Corman, John Sayles, Dick Miller and Forest J. Ackerman turn up in cameos. Cert '18.

The Incredible Melting Man (RCA Columbia)

Astronaut Alex Rebar comes back from a trip round the rings of Saturn with the worst skin complaint I have ever seen. Escaping from a NASA hospital he heads off into the forest leaving behind a trail of slime and rotting limbs. The only way he can stop himself falling apart completely (like the script) is by eating the various campers and fishermen



Halloween



Croppers

he meets on his way. A 50s style monster flick trocked out with exceptionally yucky Rick Baker makeup. Cert '16'

Invasion of the Body Snatchers (The Video Collection)

Pod people from outer space invade the tiny California community of Santa Mira. Assuming the exact physical characteristics of the locals, they take over their identities while they sleep. Can Dr. Kevin McCarthy stay awake long enough to alert the authorities? A classic 50s frightener, expertly scripted and brilliantly directed by action specialist Don 'Dirty Harry' Siegel. The studio insisted on a tacked on happy ending. A 1960 sequel starring Leonard Nimoy was not half as good. Cert '18'

Island of Terror (Rank)

On a remote Irish island policeman Sam Kydd reels from his pushbike in horror at the sight of a body sucked dry of bone! Plastic poached eggs from another world are on the rampage and only imported scientists Peter Cushing and Edward Judd can stop them. A vintage (1966) sci-h piece with plenty going on to take your mind off the cheap special effects. Cert '18'

Just Before Dawn (Rank)

Fifty six 13th style thrills as a bunch of clear cut kids find their holiday disrupted by knife-wielding loonies. The setting is Delaware country, and this scores over most others of its kind by having believable characters who don't just sit around waiting to be slaughtered. They fight back. The way that the heroine gets rid of the number one

nutcase just has to be seen by connoisseurs of bizarre screen mayhem. Directed by Jeff (Squint) Lieberman. Cert '18'

The Keep (CIC)

World War II German soldiers discover a terrifying supernatural force lurking inside the walls of an old fortress in this special-effects laden horror fantasy from the man who created *Masters of the Air*. Jürgen (Das Boot) Prochnow is the German commander, and Scott Glenn the obligatory American hero who turns up to do battle with the monster in the final reel. Cert '15'

Lifeforce (Guild)

An extremely silly big budget version of Colin Wilson's excellent novel, *Space Vampires* which has astronaut Steve Railsback discovering a very leeching rude space girl (Marilyn May) inside the tail of Halley's Comet. He brings her back to Earth and she turns half of the population of London into shrivelled-looking zombies. Scientist Frank Finlay looks perturbed, possibly thinking the makers of *Quatermass* and the *Pit* might sue for plagiarism. Great special effects though. Cert '18'

The Lift (Warner)

A lift in a tower block develops homicidal tendencies in this tingling Dutch thriller. The plot has it's ups and downs but generally it's right on the button—an unusual premise 'elevated' to new heights by clever direction and good performances. Would have played well on a double bill with *Shaff*. Cert '18'



A Nightmare on Elm Street

Mausoleum (Apex)

Beautiful Bobbie Broscoe turns into what looks like Linda Blair's ugly sister in this *Exorcist*-inspired low-budgeter bolstered by great John Buechler makeup effects. She plays Susan Norwood, a lady who should have stopped to spell her surname backward before venturing into creepy crypts for picnics. Now her husband Marjoe Gortner is going to pay for spending all that time at the office. Cert '18.

Monster (Warner)

If you ever wondered what the monsters in those old horror flicks had in mind when they coked off the scantily clad heroine then take a look at this modern variation on the same theme. These scaly *Creature From the Black Lagoon* type critters pop up out of the sea one day and start goosing every female in sight. Doug McClure is on hand to spoil the fun. It was directed by a woman, Barbara Peeters. Cert '18.

Mutations (RCA Columbia)

Mad botanist Donald Pleasence seeks to cross a plant with a human but keeps botching the job. His failures go to a trash show run by a horribly scared Tom Baker (in the days before he went time travelling as Dr. Who). In the end our Donald turns student Brad Harris into a gigantic venus fly trap and is promptly scooped for his pains. A nonsense horror movie from top cameramen Jack Cardiff! Love or hate it, one thing is for sure: It's more lively than *Garden of Evil*. Watch out for some startling ap-

pearances by real life freaks, particularly the spily named "Popeye". Cert '18.

A Nightmare On Elm Street (CBS/Fox)

The kids on Elm Street have been having some very bad dreams involving a child molester named Freddie Krueger who chases them with long, sharp razor blade fingers. And if he catches them—they're dead! This Wes Craven horror hit is one of the most scary movies of recent years with a host of brilliantly realized special effects scenes. The twist climax is a bit silly, but as a whole it's a modern classic of the genre. Cert '18.

Of Unknown Origin (Warner)

An ambitious young executive (Peter Weller) loses his cool when he finds his lovely home invaded by a giant rat. He ends up wrecking the place himself in his effort to destroy it. An unusual flight of macabre fancy from George Pan Cosmatos, the Greek director of *Rambo*. Cert '18.

The Omen (CBS Fox)

The smash hit of 1976 features Gregory Peck as the U.S. diplomat who finds out his child has three axes talloped on his bones and can cause very nasty things to happen to folks who get in his way. A well developed script helps, but the gore murders drew the crowds in: most notably David Warner's getting decapitated by a sheet of flying glass and priest Patrick Troughton being skewered by a lightning rod. More imaginative deaths followed in two otherwise inferior sequels. Cert '18.



Scanners

The Oracle (IVS)

When newlywed Caroline Capers Powers moves into the apartment of a missing psychic she should know better than to start playing around with an old fortune telling device she finds in the attic. Before long ghastly apparitions are the order of the day and a psychic killer is on the her tail. A grisly low budgeter filmed in New York by Roberta Findlay, the lady who photographed *Snuff*. Cert '18'

Piranha (Wamer)

Twisty Bradford Dillman tries to prevent a mutant strain of man-eating fish from lunching on teenagers at a summer camp in this fast-moving pink size Jaws ripoff from producer Roger Corman. Lots of in-jokes from director Joe Gremlins Dante spice up the proceedings, and horror buffs will be happy to see Barbara Steele as a sinister lady army officer, Kevin McCarthy as the mad scientist who created the monsters, and of course the ever-reliable Dick Miller supplying laughs in one of his regular cameos. Cert '18'

The Pit and The Pendulum (Guild)

The third and possibly most famous of Roger Corman's popular 60s 'Poe cycle' has Vincent Price hamming it up as usual as a 16th-century Spanish nobleman who believes he has been responsible for burying his wife (Barbara Steele) alive. In reality it's a sinister plot concocted by Babs and her lover to drive him mad. Good Daniel Haller sets and lush camerawork disguises the budget deficiencies well, and the pendulum

scene is a classic. 'Down and still down it came, to cross the region of the heart...' Cert '18'

Poltergeist (MGM/UA Video)

Ghosts come out of the telly and spirit away a little girl in this big budget Spielberg scare opus. Her parents, JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson hire tiny clairvoyant Zelda Rubinstein to rescue her. Lots of very good special effects, but only one of them—where a face suddenly falls apart—is really shocking. Directed by Tobe (Texas Chainsaw) Hooper. Cert '18'

Psycho (CIC)

Welcome to the Bates Motel, where rooms are cheap because the shower facilities are lousy. Hitchcock's classic 1961 shocker has Janet Leigh (mother of Halloween Jamie Lee Curtis) stealing some money from her employer and absconding with it. She ends up becoming the victim in one of the screen's greatest murder scenes. What have you done Mother? says Norman. 'Get back down to the fruit cellar where you belong and leave me to clear up.' Anthony Perkins has been in other movies once, but you try and name them... Cert '18'

Psycho II (CIC)

It's two decades later and Norman's out of the psycho ward. But is he still crazy after all those years? You bet he is! Australian director Richard Franklin comes up with a sequel that doesn't disgrace the classic original. There's no shower bath murder this time, but a scene involving a shovel is a plotter, and one shot in which the camera fluidly tracks down from an attic window to observe strange goings on in the cellar is worthy of



the master himself. Perkins is wonderful and newcomer Meg Tilly also scores as the first guest at the newly reopened motel. Cert '88.

The Raven (Rank)

A very enjoyable Roger Corman spoof in which Vincent Price, Boris Karloff and Peter Lorne slug it out as 15th Century magicians. Lorne gets all the best jokes (he ad-libbed them apparently) as the cowardly Dr Adolphus Bedlo, turned into a raven by evil Boris, while Vince's tongue is firmly in his sophisticated cheek as retired sorcerer Easmus Craven, who ends up doing battle

with Karloff in a special effects laden climax. An impossibly young Jack Nicholson turns in the worst performance as Price's son. Cert '88.

Razorback (Cannon)

The title creature is a gigantic wild bear that can rip a man in half and demolish a house in seconds, and after Gregory Hanson loses his animal rights campaigner wife to it he determines to have his revenge. A sort of *Moby-Dick* on land, exceptionally well filmed on black Australian locations by top pop video director Russell Mulcahy (who went on to do the recent *Highlander*). Cert '88.

Re-Animator (Entertainment)

A grandly gruesome low budgeter from first-time director Stuart Gordon. Herbert West (Jeffrey Combs) has discovered a fluid that can bring the dead back to screaming, kicking life—and the local morgue will never be the same again! One character gets a bone saw through his stomach, while another wanders around looking for his head. Based on an H.P. Lovecraft story and definitely not to be taken seriously. The talented Gordon has since completed *The Doll* and *From Beyond*. Cert '88.

Return of the Living Dead (Vestron)

They're back. They're hungry—and they're not vegetarians! A wonderful new zombie movie from Dan O'Bannon (the author of such hits as *Alien* and *Blue Thunder*) which has our greedy friends breaking out of a U.S. Medical supply warehouse and nothing on everything in sight. These lads are big eaters. After disposing of a team of doctors ludicrous enough to be on the premises, one of the revolting creatures grabs a CB radio in an ambulance and requests "Send more paramedics!" A marvelous mixture of gore and laughs. An absolute must-see. Cert '88.

Road Games (Embassy)

James Lee Curtis is pest again. The time the heroine of *Halloween* is hitchhiking through the Australian outback when she gets picked up by a trucker (Stacy Keach) who may or may not be a psychotic killer of

young girls. Guessable Hitchcock style stuff from the director and writer of *Psycho* (with good performances from Keach and Curtis and a pleasing sense of location). Cert '88.

Rosemary's Baby (CIC)

Mia Farrow goes through the strangest pregnancy on record in this classic Roman Polanski witchcraft thriller. Thanks to a brew concocted by strange next door neighbours Ruth Gordon and Sidney Blackmer, she gets thinner! Eventually it turns out she is expecting the devil's child. Husband John Cassavetes is most apologetic. Its producer, gimmick merchant William Castle, can be spotted in a phone booth on one scene. Cert '68.

Rosemary's Killer (Entertainment in Video)

A crazed World War II marine kills his unfaithful girlfriend and her lover with a pitchfork. Thirty-two years later he returns to the scene of the crime and starts cutting up rough once more. A typical stalk and slash movie from 1981, enhanced by graphics Tom Savery gave effects which include a shot-gun blasted head and somebody getting a bayonet through the top of their skull. Its director, Joseph Zito, went on to make invasion *U.S.A.* and *Mission in Aston* for Chuck Norris. Is that a promotion? Cert '88.

Scanners (Guild)

The most popular of all exploding head movies has the great Michael Ironside as the deadly telepath Darryl Revok who plans to take over the world with his awesome powers. Patrick (Danger Man) McGeehan is a scientist who sets good telepath Stephen Lack on Ironside's tail. Solid action

throughout, and the concluding battle—in which veins expand and eyes pop thanks to excruciatingly realistic Dick Smith makeup—is a corker. Cert '18'

Screamtime (Medusa)

Two bad lads pinch some video cassettes from a New York store and go home to watch them. A trio of horror stories emerge, involving houses haunted by mass murderers and garden gnomes, and a Punch and Judy man who goes bananas shrieking "That's the way to do it!" as he bashes peoples' bones in. They finish viewing and something very nasty happens. Three British-made shorts framed by a pretty naff American prologue. The best is Michael Armstrong's *Dream House*—a gory treat. Cert '18'

The Shining (Warner)

This lavish Stanley Kubrick version of Stephen King's chunky bestseller seems a disappointment on first viewing. But look again and you'll find much to admire. Jack Nicholson goes way over the top as a frustrated writer looking after a haunted hotel who eventually takes an axe to his sanity for disturbing his concentration, but the sets are great and one overhead shot of a hedge maze is worth the rental price alone. Cert '18'

Shock (Stabelcane)

A superior psychothriller that marked the final film of master Italian stylist Mario Bava (though most of it was directed by his son Lamberto). Annasac Dana Nicolodi (then Dana Argento's wife) has strange nightmares involving her dead addict husband

Some stunning images, and the macabre climax obviously draws inspiration from Poe's *The Black Cat*. Cert '18'

Sisters (PolyGram)

Margot Kidder (of *Superman* fame) plays murderous Siamese twins in this excellent Hitchcockian chiller from Brian De Palma. There's a brutal *Psycho* style slaying in the first reel which is witnessed in *Rear Window* fashion by reporter Jennifer Salt. She spends the rest of the movie trying to unravel the mystery with the aid of quirky private detective Charles Dunning. Some real edge-of-the-seat thrills, and the final image is wonderful! Cert '18'

The Slumber Party Murders (Cannon)

A madman on the loose with a power drill slaughters helpless college girls. They'll teach them not to hold wild parties while Mom and Pop are away on holiday! A straightforward, no-frills stalk and slash piece well directed by Amy Jones and written by feminist novelist Rita Mae Brown. This was originally entitled *Slumber Party Massacre*, but its distributors didn't want everyone to think it was a nasty! Heavily cut to get a video '18'

Squirm (Rank)

A collapsing electric cable stirs up a horde of angry bloodworms in this yucky 1976 shocker. Pretty soon a small Georgia town is besieged by the critters. They come through shower appliances and burrow into peoples' faces: 250,000 worms were supposedly used, but in many scenes it just

looks like the makers poured a ton of thick spaghetti into the camera. Silly enough to be fun. Cert '18'

The Stuff (CBS Fox)

A thick vanilla milkshake with a mind of its own is the menace in this offbeat effort from independent film maker Larry Cohen. Cohen regular Michael Moriarty gives his usual quirky performance as the industrial spy hired to find out what *The Stuff* is made of. One or two grotesque special effects showing *Stuff*-ies heads spitting apart but

otherwise more funny than horrific. Cert '15'

Suspiria (Cannon)

The best way to see Dana Argento's nerve-racking classic is in a cinema equipped with first class stereo sound, because though the title means *Whispers* it is one of the loudest horror movies you will ever hear. Pretty, vulnerable Jessica Harper arrives at the Freiburg dance academy and finds the place to be run by witches. The story doesn't make much sense, but Argento



An American Woodstock in London

bombards his audience with non-stop shocks involving rooms full of barbed wire, maggots dripping from ceilings, and people being chopped in two by falling glass. A masterpiece of its kind! Cert '18.

Tales From The Crypt and Vault of Horror (CBS Fox)

A good value double bill of Anticost anthology pictures from the early 70s. Gleefully from banned EC horror comic books, they feature some well known faces. *Crypt* is the best. Joan Collins murders her husband on Christmas Eve and ends up in a homicidal Santa's sack; Les Hendry's car crash nightmare comes true; Nigel Patrick runs the gauntlet of a tunnel lined with razor blades etc. *Vault* is more of the same with artist Tom Baker discovering that what he paints comes true and Daniel Meeey ending up 'on top' for a restaurant full of vampires. Cert '18.

Tales of Terror (Guild)

A handsomely mounted 1962 compendium of Edgar Allan Poe lightens from Roger Corman, all starring Vincent Price. Best is the middle story, a comical version of *The Black Cat*, in which Vinco finds himself bricked up in Peter Lorne's cellar for fooling around with his wife. Topping and tailing are *Morla*—a standard demonic possession yarn with a predictable climax—and *The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar*, in which Price is kept alive after his death by evil megalomaniac Basil Rathbone. This has an extremely grisly climax that was cut for its

cinema release but is reinstated for the video. Good value for chiller fans! Cert '18.

The Thing (CIC)

A pretty gross remake of the 1951 Howard Hawks science-fiction classic. There a group of scientists at a remote Antarctic base were menaced by an eight foot tall vegetable from outer space (played by TVs Matt Dillon, James Arness). Here director John Carpenter uses grim Rob Bottin makeup to show the creature transforming into some nightmarish shapes. Well written by Bill Lancaster's son, but the effects are the star. Cert '18.

Titan Find (PolyGram)

Originally titled *The Creature*, this is a miffy little Alien spoof that showcases some good special effects and a suitably wacky performance by Klaus Kinski as a dotty West German research scientist stranded on a remote planet with a monster who eats Earthlings for breakfast, dinner and tea. The plot springs few surprises, but it's well acted and blends humour and horror in a refreshingly assured fashion. Cert '18.

Twins of Evil (Rank)

The sultry Mary and Madeleine Collinson were *Playboy* magazine's first two playmates in October 1970. Shortly afterwards they were signed up by Hammer to appear in this horror flick. They play vampire hunter Peter Cushing's wives and exhibit a lovely pair of lunge apiece. Cushing gives the best performance—but he doesn't look as good with his clothes off! Cert '18.

Two Thousand Maniacs (VPD)

'Yessss-ss! Oh the South's gonna rise again! Put your hands together for the Pleasant Valley Boys and a goodly slice of Southern hospitality as visitors to a tiny Confederate ghost town are barbecued, chopped up, squashed, and generally don't have a good time at all. Of course we don't see all this. The video '18' certificate makes it look as though they all died from natural causes. One of the few chances you'll get (in this country) to see a movie by the legendary gore master Herschel Gordon Lewis.

Vampire Circus (Rank)

This 1971 hammer horror begins in fine style with a gory pre-credits sequence showing angry Serbian villagers gaving the bloodsucking Count Mitterhouse (Roger Tayman) a bit of stick—a long pointed one! but you can't keep a bad man down, and years later a plague of vampires—in the shape of a travelling circus—comes to town to avenge him. Good sets and stylish direction by Robert Young. Well above average. Cert '18.

Vampyres (Rank)

Probably the sexiest horror movie on record. This steamy yarn has the gorgeous blonde haired Anikka (Playboy magazine's May 1973 fold-out) and her statuesque girlfriend Madeleine. More luring men to their remote country mansion for a spot of nooky—and then drinking their blood! Imagination shot in England by the Spanish painter Jose Larraz. Lots of nudity and gore. Cert '18.

Videodrome (CIC)

Max Renn (James Woods), an independent cable TV station owner, discovers a real life torture show called *Videodrome* and plunges into a nightmare world of hallucination. David Cronenberg's excellent horror fantasy has been heavily cut for video, but we sllise such moments as James Woods plunging his hand into a gaping video cassette slit in his stomach. Fine Rick Baker effects. A total original. Cert '18.

The Wicker Man (Cannon)

Originally billed as second feature to *Dont Look Now* (1972), this superior witchcraft thriller has gained quite a reputation over the years as a neglected classic. Edward Woodward is excellent as the Christian policeman who finds pagan practices on a remote Scottish island. Brit Edland does a fetching rude dance, and the climax is really frightening. Cert '18.

Zombie Creeping Flesh (Apex)

A toxic gas explosion turns factory workers into blood sucking zombies. An inferior rip off of George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* that has been severely limited to get a video '18' rating. Still worth seeing though, for one or two nicely staged zombie battles and the sight of the lovely Margit Evelyn Newton running stark naked through the Amazon jungle—now there's something you don't come across every day! The dialogue is great too. I particularly like the moment where, after just avoiding a hectic zombie rush-up one of our heroes asks the other 'What's eatin' you today?'



Horror
Master

PETER
CUSHING



The
Bride of
Frankenstein

ELSA
LANCHESTER



Sissy
Spacek

CARRIE



Nastassia
Kinski

CAT
PEOPLE



Jack
Nicholson
THE
SHINING



Stephen
King's
**CAT'S
EYES**

Company Listings

Here is an alphabetical list of video distributors whose titles are mentioned in this magazine. Happy Haunting!

Alex Video

Avon House,
360 Oxford Street,
London W1
Telephone 01-409 1984

Brant Walker Video Ltd.

9 Chesterfield Street,
London W1
Telephone 01-491 4430

Cannon Video

Thorn House,
Upper St. Martin's Lane,
London WC2H 9ED
Telephone 01-836 2444

Careyvision Home Video

Unit 4,
Whitworth Road,
Pin Green,
Stevenson

CBS Fox Video

Penelope Industrial Estate,
Greenford,
Middlesex UB6 7RU
Telephone 01-897 2552

Channel 5

1 Rockley Road,
London W14
Telephone 01-743 3474

CIC Video

Glenhome House,
15-17 Hammersmith Grove,
London W6 0ND
Telephone 01-846 8433

Embassy Home Entertainment

Sloane Square House,
Holbein Place,
Sloane Square,
London SW1W 8NT
Telephone 01-409 1925

Entertainment In Video Ltd.

27 Soho Square,
London

Guild Home Video

Crown House,
2 Church Street,
Walton-On Thames,
Surrey KT12 2QS
Telephone 01-546 3377

Ivor Film Services Ltd.

Pinewood Studios,
Ivor,
Buckinghamshire SL0 0NH
Telephone 01-0753 651700

NVS Video

201 Ardleigh Green Road,
Hornchurch,
Essex RM11 2SD
Telephone 01-04024 46404

Medusa Communications

109 Bancroft,
Hitchin,
Hertfordshire,
Telephone 01-0462 36661

MGM/UA Home Video

Hammer House,
113-117 Wardour Street,
London W1V 3TD
Telephone 01-437 8843

Palace Video

16/17 Wardour Mews,
London W1V 3DG
Telephone 01-734 7060

PolyGram Video

1 Rockley Road,
London W14 0DL
Telephone 01-743 3474

Rank Video Library

P.O. Box 70,
Great West Road,
Brentford,
Middlesex TW8 6HR
Telephone 01-568 5222

RCA/Columbia Pictures Video U.K.

1 Bedford Avenue,
London WC1 3DT
Telephone 01-636 8373

Shblecme

Unit 10,
Brunswick Industrial Park,
Waterfall Road,
New Southgate,
London N11 1JL
Telephone 01-368 1276

Thorn EMI Video Programmes Ltd (See listing for Cannon)

Vestron Video International

6-10 Bristol Street,
London W1
Telephone 01-499 3821

The Video Collection

Unit 10,
Brunswick Industrial Park,
Waterfall Road,
London N11 1JL
Telephone 01-368 1276

Video Programme Distributors

Building No. 1,
GEC Estate,
East Lane, Wembley,
Middlesex HA9 7FF
Telephone 01-904 0521

Virgin Video

61-63 Portabello Road,
London W11
Telephone 01-221 7535

Warner Home Video

PO Box 59,
Alderton Lane,
Wembley,
Middlesex HA9 1FS
Telephone 01-996 8044

SCREAMS FOR SALE

A look at the wild world of horror movie advertising . . .

'Beware the beat of the cloth-wrapped feet!' That was the lurid advertising line that, coupled with a picture of a monstrous figure reaching out for a busty and obviously helpless female, drew me into the very first horror movie I ever saw. It was a 1957 Hammer production called *The Murky's Stroud*, and although I wasn't old enough to convincingly pass inspection as someone of '16 years or over', I argued with the girl in the box office until the pressure from the folks in the queue behind made her give in. I was thus allowed to experience the heady thrills of watching a bandage-wrapped fellow named Prom chasing the desecrators of his tomb and doing nasty 'X' certificate things to them. It was a forgettable film in most respects, as was its co-feature, *Frankenstein Created Woman*. But I shall always remember that seductive poster with its one simple but potent slogan. I later got a copy of it for my wall.

In fact most horror movie buffs have their walls plastered with gaudy posters depicting monsters of all shapes, sizes and denominations pursuing women with the sort of chest measurements that one reads about only in the Guinness Book of Records. They also have huge collections of press books scorching in red with lines like 'More Horrible Than Horror! More Terri-

ble Than Terror!' and 'Guaranteed To Shock You To Death—or Your Life Refunded!'

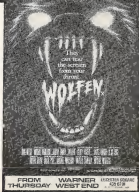
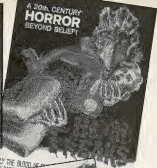
And of course they realise that in most cases these claims must be taken with a very large pinch of salt. For example, the 1976 production, *Gizzly* promised '18 feet of gut-crunching, man-eating terror!' and delivered a pretty dopey looking bear who didn't do much more than growl at the cast. Then there was the claim that 'We cannot be responsible if you never sleep again!' given by the makers of *Blood Men*, a 1971 no-budgeter about a psycho slasher after a big money inheritance. In reality, most sensible audiences were snoring softly before the end credits were reached.

It seems that the lower a horror movie's budget is, the more lurid a title its makers will stick it with in a desperate attempt to draw in the crowds. And it works. After all, what right-minded genre buff could walk past a cinema showing *Blood Dregs of the She-Devils*? This 'Terrifying, Screaming Plunge Into The Depths of Hell!' promised a 'A well pack of voluptuous virgins' and delivered a small bunch of dopey looking females who practised black magic wumbo jumbo in a shack somewhere in California. Similarly that great double bill of *I Eat Your Skin* and *I Drink Your Blood* ('Two great blood-

horrors to rip out your guts!') featured Hippie devil cultists fed on rabid dog's blood and killer zombies with eyes like fried eggs. I was first in the queue.

A man who really knew how to sell a horror movie was the late William Castle, who had his first major success in 1958 when he hit upon the gimmick of taking out a thousand dollar insurance policy to cover anyone who died of fright during his suspense thriller *Macabre*. He continued with *The House On Haunted Hill* (a 1959 Vincent Price ghost story shot in 'Emergo'—a process by which a luminous skeleton emerged from a box above the cinema screen at a crucial moment and floated on wires above the audience. It usually lasted a low days before succumbing to a merciless onslaught of popcorn bores! But my favourite, and certainly the most shocking of Castle's ideas was the one he came up with for *The Tingler* (1959). This was a great movie in which Price played a doctor who discovers that intense fear creates an insect-like creature inside the human body. If the terrified person doesn't scream then they are 'tingled' to death! During one scene, the Tingler escaped into a movie audience and the screen goes black, which was the cue for Castle to throw a switch that shot voltage into selected cinema seats. Great idea, eh?

Nowadays fewer and fewer low budget horrors are seeing the light of day at British cinemas. But at least the publicist's art still flourishes within the video industry. As stronger censorship makes home-consumed horror tamer, so the distributors' claims become wilder. Careyvision's *Hard Rock Zombies* ('They Killed. They slaughtered. They sang a song or two . . .') supposedly 'Makes Thriller look like Airplane!', Rank's *Tales That Witness Madness* promises 'Your Mind Won't Believe Your Eyes' and VPD's *2000 Maniacs* is apparently 'Brutal . . . Evil . . . Ghostly Beyond Belief!' It's also out beyond belief, but they don't mention that. No wonder that a familiar lament among horror film fans is: 'Loved the poster video jacket. Shame about the movie . . .'



THE EASTMAN COLOR

ET MOVIES



SEXY SCREAMERS

A look back at the screen's great scream queens . . .

Your average movie monster may be extremely ugly, but he's certainly not slow off the mark where women are concerned. Because while the handsome, square-jawed hero of the film may waste time on pondering whether or not to ask that sexy heroine back to his place for a nightcap, our smooth talking fiend will usually favour the more direct approach: swooping down and carrying her off to his gothic castle or jungle lair to get straight down to the nitty gritty.

Beautiful girls have been a prerequisite ingredient of horror movies ever since the silent days, when the lovely Mary Philbin snatched off Lon Chaney's mask to reveal the twisted features of *The Phantom of the Opera* (1925). Chaney's tormented dweller-in-the-catacombs had understandably become obsessed with her, but she didn't fancy him after taking a gander at his skin condition. As it turned out, Mary's date was quite eligible in comparison with fellow screamer Fay Wray's. This glamorous actress was told she would be swept off her feet by the 'tallest leading man in Hollywood', and thought it was going to be Clark Gable. Instead she found herself a puppet in the hands of that big ape *King Kong* (1932). The difference in sizes proved a barrier to any lasting relationship, but Fay was a big success in this classic of fantasy cinema, and she went on to become the undisputed queen of 1930s horror movie heroines in other famous genre flicks like *Dr Xand The Mystery of the Wax Museum*.

The 40s brought a host of Universal monster pictures where the likes of Australian-born Evelyn Ankers and former comedienne Mae Clarke suffered the unwanted attentions of Dracula, Frankenstein and their ilk. But the next decade saw the gentler sex starting to get their own back. The statuesque Alison Hayes spearheaded this new feminist approach when a ray from an alien spacecraft caused her to grow to an astonishing height, all the better to get revenge on her faithless husband, Harry. *Attack of the 50 Foot Woman* (1956) was the title of the film, and she proved a formidable menace: 'She's going to tear up this town until she finds Harry' commented a bystander—'And then she's gonna tear up Harry!' Another tight-sweated 50s siren who could more than stand up for herself was the sexy Maria English, who became *The She Creature* (1956) and carried off men! Miss English perfected this talent a year later as the Voodoo Woman. In the meantime British audiences were enjoying the equally beautiful Barbara Shelley's transformation into a slinky Cat Girl (1957). Barbara went on to become the top Hammer films heroine of the 1960s in pictures like *Dracula Prince of Darkness* and *Quatermass and the Pit*.

Ask any horror buff worth his dried bat's blood and he'll tell you that the most memorable of all 60s screen queens was Barbara Steele, a graduate of the famous Rank Charm School who went to Italy and became a big star as a reincarnated witch in Mario Bava's nightmarish hit, *Black Sunday* (1960). Barbara, who one influential French critic describes as 'the only girl in movies whose eyebrows can snarl' went on to peddle her dark eyed beauty in a succession of similar roles in pictures like *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961); *Castle of Blood* (1963); *The Man of Death* (1964) and *An Angel for Satan* (1965). In the early 70s she turned up wearing striking green makeup in the otherwise lacklustre *Curse of the Crimson Altar* and could be seen suffering a horrible fate in the bathtub in David Cronenberg's gruesome 1975 shocker, *Shivers*.

Phantasm





Exorcist II—The Heretic

Hammer films were the chief worldwide exponents of colourful horror movies throughout the 60s and 70s, and part of their success undoubtedly stemmed from the fact that they always ensured that their regular stable of monsters was backed up with a steady supply of delectable cheesecake. It was they who introduced the world to Raquel Welch in a mink lined bikini in *One Million Years B.C.* (1966), and Ursula Andress wore little more than a smile at times in her 1965 remake of *She*. In the 70s, when the box office appeal of the conventional gothic horror picture appeared to be waning, they injected a healthy dose of sexuality into the genre with the casting of sultry Ingrid Pitt as a lesbian vampire in a steamy adaptation of J. Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla*. The movie was entitled *The Vampire Lovers* and it had a whole host of decorous females for Miss Pitt to nibble on, including future *Dynasty* star Kate O'Mara. Among the other well known actresses who flaunted their attributes in latter day Hammer horrors were more *Dynasty* names: Joan Collins and Stephanie Beacham, and the lovely Swedish star Julie Ege.

Most of these graduated to other things. But Caroline Munro, an ex-model best known at one time for appearances in the famous Lambs Navy Rum posters, decided to stick with the genre. Moving from providing Hammer glamour in pics like *Captain Kronos*, *Vampire Hunter* (1973) to being menaced by a nutty Joe Spinell in the slice and dice shockers, *The Last Horror Film* (1980) and *Murder* (1981). Soon we will see her being chased by yet another mad slasher in the low budget American thriller *April Fool's Day*. But as far as most of us are concerned the champion screamer of our time is Jamie Lee Curtis, the wide-eyed heroine of *Halloween* (1978) who was subsequently stalked by a variety of maniacs in pictures like *Prom Night* (1980), *Terror Train* (1981) and *Road Games* (1982). Her mother Janet Leigh went the same route twenty five years ago when she took the screen's most famous shower in *Psycho*—in the horror film, as in life, breeding will always tell.



